

U.S. Patent Application No. 09/900,533
Amendment dated May 21, 2004
Response to Office Action dated March 12, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and continued examination of this application are respectfully requested.

The amendment to the claims is fully supported by the present application, including the claims as originally filed. Since claims are only being cancelled by way of this Amendment or certain language is being cancelled by this Amendment, no questions of new matter should arise. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

With respect to the amendments, claims 4 and 60 have been cancelled by way of this Amendment. Claims 33 and 41 have been amended by removing the phrase "wherein said alkali metal formate is present in an amount of from about 3 M to about 12 M." Accordingly, by this Amendment, claims 1-3, 5-18, 20, and 22-59 are pending. While claims 11-18, 20, 22-24, 44-52, and 58 are withdrawn, the applicants believe that in view of the allowance of claim 1 and the remaining independent claims, the remaining claims should be allowable as well since they relate to method claims that are using the compositions of the independent claims that have been examined. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to re-join these claims at this time and to allow all of the pending claims.

At page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 4, 33, 41, 55, and 60 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as the Examiner believes that these claims are indefinite. In particular, the Examiner believes that claims 33 and 41 recite two (2) different concentrations in the same claim and further, that claims 4 and 60 are not clear with respect to a chelating agent being cationic. For the following reasons, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

With respect to claims 33 and 41, these claims have been amended to delete one of the phrases that relates to the concentration.

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With respect to claims 4 and 60, the applicants do believe that a chelating agent can be cationic. However, to avoid further delay, the applicants have canceled claims 4 and 60, especially since claim 3 covers ionic chelating agents which would cover the subject matter of claims 4 and 60. Accordingly, for these reasons, the rejection should be withdrawn.

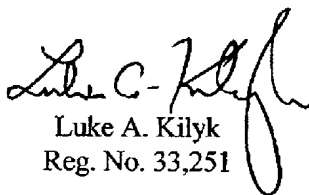
At the bottom of page 2, the Examiner acknowledges that the remaining examined claims are allowable over the art of record and that appropriate claims will be re-joined. The applicants believe that in view of the above comments, all pending claims should now be allowed.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, the applicants respectfully request the reconsideration of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to Deposit Account No. 03-0060. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such extension is requested and should also be charged to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


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